FOR THE MINISTRY
Berkeley, California

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXVII. MAY, 1919 No. 12

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

CONTENTS OF NO. 12

PEACE AFTER WAR 137
PERPLEXING PROVIDENCES 138
THE STILL HOUR:—
THROUGH NATURE TO GOD 140
THE BOOK OF NATURE 140
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB 141
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL:—
WHAT FATHERS CAN DO FOR THEIR BOYS 143
THE GOOD SHEPHERD 144
NATURAL HISTORY:—
THE CLEANLINESS OF ANIMALS 145
CHILDREN'S CLASSICS:—
THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE 146
CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE NOTICES 148
IMPORTANT NOTICES 148

PEACE AFTER WAR.

(AN EXTRACT FROM THE COMMEMORATION ODE.)

Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as the field,
So bountiful is Fate.
But then to stand beside her
When craven churls deride her,
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,—
This shows, methinks, God's plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,
Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid earth,
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

Not in anger, not in pride,
Pure from passion's mixture rude,
Ever to base earth allied,
But with far-heard gratitude,
Still with heart and voice renewed,
To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,
The strain should close that consecrates our brave.
Lift the heart and lift the head.
Lofty be its mood and grave,
Not without a martial ring,
Not without a prouder tread
And a peal of exultation;
Little right has he to sing
Through whose heart in such an hour
Beats no march of conscious power,
Sweeps no tumult of elation.
'Tis no Man we celebrate
By his country's victories great,
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,
But the pith and marrow of a Nation
Drawing force from all her men,
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,
For her time of need, and then
Pulsing it again through them,
Till the basest can no longer cower,
Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.
Come back, then, noble pride, for 'tis her dower!
How could poet ever tower,
If his passions, hopes and fears,
If his triumphs and his tears,
Kept not measure with his people?
Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and waves!
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!
Banners, a-dance with triumph, bend your staves!
And from every mountain-peak
Let beacon fire to answering beacon speak,
Till the glad news be sent
Across a kindling continent,
Making earth feel more firm and air breathe braver:—
"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save her!
She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind.
The fire is dreadful in her eyes no more.
From her bold front the helm she doth unbind,
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,
And bids her navies, that so lately hurled
Their crashing battle, hold their thunders in,
Swimming like birds of calm along the unharmful shore."

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release.
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace.
Bow down in prayer and praise.

O Beautiful, my Country, ours once more,
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,—
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee?
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee;
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!
—*James Russell Lowell.*

PERPLEXING PROVIDENCES.

No one can read the Old Testament without observing that its writers are greatly concerned about the way in which Providence treats the righteous man. They take it for granted that he ought to be favored of God, and that the unrighteous man ought to suffer; but it appears as if God shone upon the wicked and frowned upon the good. The Psalmist complains bitterly that vile men are exalted. The prophets mention as one of the signs of the Golden Age that the churl shall no longer be counted bountiful. The book of Job is a profound discussion of the apparent contradiction of Justice. The writer of Ecclesiastes almost lost hope of a world where the same lot is assigned to saint and sinner.

When the righteous are blessed or when the unrighteous are punished, a load is lifted from the conscience and reason of these thinkers, and it appears as if their faith would have hardly any trial were this mystery of government solved. Let every man get his due, then

"God's in His heaven,
All's right with the world."

Perhaps the West can hardly appreciate the force of this complaint to the full, because it has not felt its pressure. We have not known what it is to be wronged and robbed, to be cruelly oppressed, and to suffer the last outrage in our homes without protection or redress. While the hope of justice remains, a man can endure; when justice sides with the criminal, the victim's blood turns to gall. The fierce energy of the West has wrought salvation, breaking to pieces the power of the tyrant, compelling equal laws, surrounding justice with a wall of fire, casting an invincible shield over the helpless. Certain passages of the Bible are obsolete for the West and are to us hardly intelligible. Our fathers knew their meaning. There are Christians in the East to-day that will still read them with passion. These passages are the litany of the poor, of the helpless, of women and children,—the appeal of all miserables to a silent God, Who will not move, Who seems not to care, Who has, notwithstanding, been partaker of the human Gethsemane, and Himself inspired the passion of this cry.

We of the West have our own quarrel with Providence,—although it be on a minor scale,—and it frets our souls and dashes the sweetness of faith. It appears as if through carelessness or blindness certain individuals had been confused in the arrangement of affairs, so that A receives the recompense of B, and B is condemned to the lot of A. One man is honorable, high-spirited, religious, faithful. His word is certain, his friends trust him unto death, his family adore him, the world counts him righteous. Here is one who surely will have riches and power and comfort, who will be crowned with fame before all the people. . . . And, instead thereof, his whole life is a struggle with poverty, trials and obscurity. He is not called to dignity, but to pity. Another man is selfish, tricky, merciless, mercenary, whose word goes for nothing, who has done base things, whom no one in private respects. He ought to be an object of contempt—left alone in his place till he repents and does righteousness. . . . Yet, because the fellow has plausible manners and a fluent tongue and a cunning intellect, he too often wins his way with the multitude and retains their suffrages and lives at his ease. As he drives into the city, the mud from this intriguer's carriage wheels defiles the coat of the righteous man.

This contrast may not be common, but it does occur; and it raises questions about the fairness of Providence.

This immoral situation makes good living harder for us all,—and surely any artificial hindrance is scarcely needed. Many of us are bitterly conscious of the temptation to do less than our best, and require every enforcement of virtue. Here before our eyes is a parable teaching us in so many words that integrity and piety are only the high-road to failure, and that showy and unscrupulous methods are the passport to success. There are some whom no allurements can seduce from the way of righteousness, and whom the sight of the low estate of goodness will only establish in their integrity. Others are ready enough to hearken to any voice which declares that the gods do not see behind but are as easily deceived as foolish people. Is it not dangerous for the individual that the way of unrighteousness be laid out as a primrose path while the way of honor is narrow and strait?

Is not this confusion of lots also like a misdirection from the bench, and an injustice to society? If there be a sense of the distinction between goodness and badness in the community, ought it not to receive the support and sanctions of the Eternal? Do we not, as nations, turn to history to read with relish the downfall of iniquity and the victory of righteousness? Are we not in social life ever on the alert for convincing illustrations of that unseen power which shapes human life according to the law written in our conscience? What a wanton blow to our poor perplexed consciences to see a despicable person, whose hand we would not take in the way of friendship, selected for a crown, and a saint, who has been an inspiration to us in the conflict of the soul, allotted a cross! Can our commonwealth be blamed if it follow the lead of Providence, and set rascals on high and hold the children of the Kingdom in scorn?

So it comes to pass that we begin by being concerned about good men, and end by being concerned about God. Is He also careless whether one choose the higher or lower way, whether he feed or mortify his evil self? Are fools and cowards, vain and proud persons, the same to Him as the men of the Beatitudes?

This is a very serious question, vital and final. If God be on the right side, then there is not a good man anywhere who will not hold up his head; if God goes over to the enemy, then it seems no use that the rest of us continue to fight. Let us fling away our scruples and join in the general scramble. Of course we know what God has said:—His words are in the Law of Moses and in the Sermon on the Mount; they are graven on our hearts. We also see what God does. . . . And His deeds and His words do not correspond. . . .

This is the problem of Providence; and it is not light.

We ought carefully to remember, first of all, that Providence *has not finished its work* with those two men and their affairs. It is at the foot of the page the figures are added and, till the columns are filled up no one can say whether the debtor or creditor side has the advantage. Life has many surprises, and some of them are very cheering. Knaves come oftentimes to shame and beggary, much to the relief of society. Just men suddenly win their rights, to every one's delight. Wickedness may succeed to-day and to-morrow, and be made a hissing and a reproach the third day. Honor may be set in the pillory and be pelted by the rascal multitude for a day, and be clothed in purple and borne to her throne at set of sun. And if this happy event come not to pass in our time, then the figures will be carried over the page and the balance will be struck on the other side.

Dives and Lazarus in this world may seem an argument against Providence. The argument has to be modified when you meet the two men in the next world. God has an infinite patience, and does not make haste. It will be soon enough to judge His ways when they are complete.

Is it not also our misfortune to be dazzled by the glitter of this world, and to identify the rewards of God with material prosperity? If one be rich and increased in goods, if he hold high station in church or state, then is it evident that God has blessed him? If one live in a small house and his name be not known two streets away, then has God surely *not* blessed him? Could any standard be more shallow, deceptive, unbelieving, ungodly! It would seem as if the New Testament had never been written, and Jesus had never lived in Nazareth. If the teaching of Jesus goes for anything, worldly success is no sign of divine approval, but is rather a very trying discipline. Hardship is no evidence that God is disowning a man, but may be the most convincing gift of His fatherly love. Joseph of Arimathea was no dearer to Christ than St. John; though Nero lived in a palace and wore the purple, while St. Paul was chained to a soldier and imprisoned in the barracks, the Apostle had not been willing to change with the Emperor. When God is pleased and wishes to bless the men He loves, His hands have other gifts than silver and gold.

It is more than probable, moreover, that the accounts are being squared here and now, but that our eyes are holden. Is it absolutely certain that our Dives rejoices as one on whom God's face is shining? What of the reprobation of good men, the gnawing misery of self-contempt, the conscious impoverishment of the soul, the haunting dread of the future? Are there none who would give all they have won by years of scheming and self-degradation for a quiet conscience and a good character? Does it go without saying that our Lazarus is miserable because he is not clothed in fine linen, and does not dine sumptuously every day? May he not have his own consolations?

Surely, it is no mean compensation for a severe life to be able to look every man in the face; to have the loyal friendship of six honest men; to leave an unstained name as a heritage to his children; to hear God say in the stillness of his soul, "Well done, my son."—*Ian Maclaren* (*Rev. John Watson*).

THE STILL HOUR.

THROUGH NATURE TO GOD.

Thou art, O God, the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from Thee.
Where'er we turn, Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine.

When day, with farewell beam, delays
Among the opening clouds of even,
And we can almost think we gaze
Through golden vistas into heaven,
Those hues, that make the sun's decline
So soft, so radiant, Lord, are Thine.

When youthful spring around us breathes,
Thy spirit warms her fragrant sigh,
And every flower the summer wreathes
Is born beneath Thy kindling eye.
Where'er we turn, Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine.

—*Thomas Moore.*

God has placed us here to grow, just as he placed the trees and flowers. The trees and the flowers grow unconsciously, and by no effort of their own. Man, too, grows unconsciously, and is educated by circumstances. But he can also control those circumstances, and direct the course of his life. He can educate himself. He can, by effort and thought, acquire knowledge, become accomplished, refine and purify his nature, develop his powers, and strengthen his character. And, because he can do this, he ought to do it.

Yet we must add that this is not all. There is something more. "Grow *up*," "grow up in all things"; but also "grow up in all things unto him who is our Head, even Christ." To grow up is not the final end. Grow up, in order to grow up into Christ; that is, since Christ is another name for generous love, cultivate and unfold all powers in order to do good, for the sake of helping, saving, inspiring, guiding, animating, encouraging other souls. Develop all your powers, but for universal usefulness.—*J. F. Clarke.*

You need not go to heaven to see God. Nor need you speak loud as if He were far away. Nor need you cry for wings like a dove so as to fly to Him. Settle yourself in solitude, and you will come upon God in yourself. Then entreat Him as your Father, and relate to Him your troubles. Those who can in this manner, shut themselves up in th little heaven of their own hearts, where H dwells Who made heaven and earth, walk i the excellent way. They lay their pipe righ up to the spring.—*Saint Teresa.*

THE BOOK OF NATURE.

There is a book who runs may read,
Which heavenly truth imparts;
And all the lore its scholars need,
Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

The works of God, above, below,
Within us and around,
Are pages in that book, to show
How God Himself is found.

The glorious sky, embracing all,
Is like the Maker's love,
Wherewith encompassed, great and small
In peace and order move.

Two worlds are ours,—'tis only sin
Forbids us to descry
The mystic heaven and earth within,
Plain as the sea and sky.

Thou who hast given us eyes to see
And love this sight so fair,
Give us a heart to find out Thee,
And read Thee everywhere.

—*John Keble.*

If God finishes everything in nature, if H makes the rhodora beautiful in the woo where no human eye can see it, and paint in exquisite tints the shell at the bottom o the ocean, we may trust that He will no rest till He has made all our souls and all ou lives pure, generous, noble, beautiful. W are as yet only the roots of a future beautifu plant. The best man or woman is only shoot a little way out of the ground. We ar God's plants, God's flowers. Be sure that H will help us to unfold into something serenel fair, nobly perfect, if not in this life, then i another. If He teaches us not to be satisfie until we have finished our work, He will no be satisfied till He has finished His.

If we can believe this of God, then we ca love Him as we love our father, as we love ou friend, in whose answering love we hav perfect confidence. Such a confidence i God as this is alone the source of genuin piety. Not until we are able to trust i Him as One who means to save us pe fectly, and unfold us into all the strength an beauty for which He has designed us, can w love Him with all our heart, or love ou brother-man like ourselves.—*J. F. Clarke.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass., tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Rev. W. A. Alleyne is now at Cable, Wisconsin.

Mrs. M. V. Gregory is now at Mammoth Springs, Arkansas, Wirth Route, Box 17.

OFFERS.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following list of books. Address Miss E. Clarke, 36 Lancaster Street, Cambridge, Mass. "The Virginians," Thackeray; "Underwoods," Robert Louis Stevenson; "English Humorists," Thackeray; "Chronicles of Sir John Froissart; Arranged for Young Readers"; "Hawthorne's Works"; "Deafness and Cheerfulness."

The following books are offered only to libraries open to the public: "Life of Washington," Washington Irving (five volumes); set of Lamb's Works, (five volumes); set of Byron's Works (eight volumes); Hood's Complete Works (one large volume); "Renaissance in Italy" (Fine Arts), J. A. Symonds; "Recollections of President Lincoln and his Administration," L. E. Chittenden.

The following books are offered by Mrs. Marion G. Atwell, 605 West 115th Street, New York City: The Bible; "Defenceless America," Hudson Maxim; "The White Alley," Carolyn Wells; "From the Car Behind," Eleanor M. Ingram; "Jack Among the Indians," George Bird Grinnell; "Sebastian," Frank Danby; "Joseph in Jeopardy," Frank Danby; "Gold," Stewart Edward White; "The Full of the Moon," Caroline Lockhart; "The Science of Harmony," William Vernon Backus; "Easy Stories," Elizabeth Turner; "Comrades on the Great Divide," Ralph Victor; "Friends Though Divided; Tale of the Civil War," G. A. Henty; "A Cornet of Horse; Tale of Marlborough's Wars," G. A. Henty; "The Three Commanders," William H. Kingston; "Stepping-Stones to Literature."

The following books are offered by the Alliance Branch in Dedham, Mass. Apply to Mrs. Harriet T. Boyd, 17 Marsh Street, Dedham, Mass. "Dream Life," Ik Marvel; "Wonder Book," Nathaniel Hawthorne; "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," Jules Verne; and the following volumes of poetry: "Favorite Poems" (humorous); "Out of the Heart," John W. Chadwick; "The Hawthorn Tree," Nathan H. Dole; "Snowbound," John G. Whittier; "The North Shore Watch," George Edward Woodbury; Wordsworth's Poems; "In the Garden of Dreams," Louise Chandler Moulton.

Brookline (First Parish) Branch offers the following. Apply to Miss Brazer, 141 Summit Avenue, Brookline, Mass. Greek New Testament; "Theodore Roosevelt," Banks & Armstrong; "Life of Abraham Lincoln," J. G. Holland; "Hammersmith, His Harvard Days," M. S. Severance; "Personal Reminiscences," Chorley, Planche & Young; "History of State of Maine," Coolidge & Mansfield; "Mental Science," Hickok; "Tobacco Leaf, Its Culture and Cure," Killebrew & Myrick; "Study of Alfalfa Plant"; "Study of Ginseng Plant"; "Elementary Lessons in Physiology," Huxley; *Atlantic Monthly* (magazine), 1914, 1915, 1916; *The Nation* (magazine), January, 1917–November, 1917, inclusive, March, 1918–January, 1919, inclusive; *Survey* (magazine), February–May, 1916, inclusive, June–September, 1917, inclusive, December, 1918–March, 1919, inclusive; *New Republic* (magazine), October, 1918–March, 1919, inclusive.

I have the following magazines and books to pass on to any one who cares to pay freight or postage. Address Mrs. Charles H. Sturtz, Tama, Iowa. "Sights and Insights," Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney (two volumes), and "L'Abbé Constantin" (both suitable for girls of fifteen or sixteen); a book on Rhetoric; magazines as follows (most are complete of each kind for a year): *Saturday Evening Post, Country Gentleman, McClure's, Hearst's, Designer, Cosmopolitan* for 1917–18; also the current *Designer* which I can pass along every month for two years.

REQUESTS.

1. I am wanting very much to get "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life," by Hannah Whitall Smith. I want it to lend to the woman's prison in my State, Vermont. I correspond with the prisoners and try to help them into a higher life. For many years I have been interested in the work of the Cheerful Letter Exchange and a reader of the little paper, which is sent me by a kind friend. I could make good use of two copies of the book should you have two offers. Yours is a beautiful work and I know its value, being an invalid,—shut in always to the house for more than forty years. May you be strong to con-

tinue. Mrs. Charles Chamberlain, Craftsbury, Vermont.

2. Mrs. Ruth Herring, Vulcan, Virginia, asks for pictures for her five-year-old boy.

3. I should be glad to get some books and magazines to entertain a class of girls. Any good reading would be enjoyed. Mrs. Claude S. Threadgill, Ansonville, North Carolina.

4. Miss Grace Saunders, Tellico Plains, Tennessee, asks for *Good Housekeeping* and *Everybody's Magazine.*

5. Mrs. Gladys Lewis, Athens, Tennessee, Route 8, lives on a farm in a lonely place, fourteen miles from town. She would like reading for herself and young boys.

6. Mrs. G. E. Migon, Kerr, North Carolina, will be grateful for the *Ladies' Home Journal.*

7. A friend of mine gave me a copy of *The Cheerful Letter,* which I have enjoyed reading very much. I am fifteen years old and am fond of reading. I hope some of the kind Cheerful Letter friends will send me a few good books and magazines. Jane E. Nolen, Elamsville, Virginia.

8. Miss J. E. Herndon, Granite Springs, Virginia, will be grateful for "Miss Billy" and "Miss Billy's Decision." Miss Edith Herndon asks for "The Story Girl."

9. A Story of the Bible is asked for by Miss Tennie Owen, Sandy Level, Virginia, care of W. H. Owen.

10. I am very fond of reading, but cannot now afford to buy books, on account of long illness. I should like any books on the following topics: history, mythology, and anthropology. Has any one an encyclopædia, or parts of one to pass on? I shall be glad to have correspondents. I live on a farm and it is a very lonely life. I am willing to pay for sending books to me. Mrs. Charles H. Sturtz, Tama, Iowa.

11. Mrs. Susan Vaughan, Athens, Tennessee, Route 8, will be very grateful for scraps. She is in poor health and can no longer do hard work, but can do sewing.

12. I am a little boy seven years old. I got my leg broken in February and haven't walked any since. I get very lonely. I have one little sister and two little brothers. I am the oldest one. Pictures, books, and any toy that would amuse a little crippled boy would be appreciated. We live on a farm. Leroy Threadgill, Ansonville, North Carolina, Box 234.

13. I should be very glad to receive some good reading, books, and cards. I would also appreciate some patchwork pieces for my little girl; she is learning to sew and would like very much some scraps of any kind for her quilt. Will some one please send me a Bible, and a Testament for my little boy? I have two children; the oldest a girl of twelve, the youngest a boy. My health is poor; can not often go to church. We have no Sunday school for the children. I give for reference Rev. J. B. Roberson, Dodson, Virginia. Mrs. George Bryant, Dodson, Virginia.

14. I should be glad of a few magazines and other reading for myself, and also reading for three motherless children left to my care, aged thirteen, eleven, and five years. I have received *The Cheerful Letter* for a number of years and have enjoyed it very much, as life is very quiet and lonely, and reading is almost my only luxury. I shall appreciate any reading you have for us. Mrs. William A. Iles, Solar, Texas.

15. I think all of my friends have forgotten me; but I thank them for past favors and ask to be remembered again, especially on my birthday, which is May 10. I pray for the success of the work. Mrs. M. A. Benton (Mrs. Jessie Benton), Ansonville, North Carolina, Box 31.

16. I am twenty years old, and my health is very bad. I should appreciate some reading matter and I should like to correspond with some ladies. I like to read. I am just getting up from influenza and am very weak. I have a brother in France. I am fond of crocheting and knitting. Miss Ornie Tyson, Ansonville, North Carolina, Box 213.

17. Mrs. H. C. Phillips, Buena Vista, Virginia, sends warm thanks to all friends who have remembered her. She writes: "I just keep thinking of the happiness you have brought to our home. I love *The Cheerful Letter.*"

18. I want to thank you and the kind friends who have been sending me reading matter. I should appreciate any old magazines and papers you have to pass on to others. I have five girls and two boys. All enjoy reading. I should like to receive scraps for patchwork and quilts. I wish I might hear

from some of my old correspondents whom I have lost trace of. I wish to thank Mrs. R. H. Loomis for sending me the *Ladies' Home Journal;* we all enjoy reading it. My husband has been blind for nearly three years, but has had his eyes treated, so now he can see a little out of one eye. Mrs. N. E. Russell, Polkton, North Carolina, Route 2, Box 111.

19. My husband works away from home a good bit and I get very lonely with only my two little children,—one a girl most two years and the other most six months old. They keep me very busy, though. I should be glad indeed to correspond with some one, as it would help to pass lonely hours. I should be glad of any cheer. Mrs. Thomas W. Hatcher, Stuart, Virginia.

20. Verna Washington, a ten-year-old girl at Endicott, Virginia, R.F.D. Box 17, will be glad of picture-books and cards.

21. As I have not heard from the Cheerful Letter friends in a long while I am writing asking for some periodicals,—the *Ladies' Home Journal, Priscilla, Needlecraft,* or magazines of any date would be appreciated so very much by my seventeen-year-old daughter and myself. We are very lonely, having two dear soldier boys in the Force of Occupation in Germany. Time drags slowly for us. Mrs. Ada V. Wann, Waxahachie, Texas, Route 1-A.

22. Mrs. Mary Morgan, Copeland, Arkansas, asks for *Cosmopolitan* for 1912 or any story magazine.

23. Mrs. H. G. Busch, Pleasant View, Virginia, asks for cards and books for her little boy, as he has no playmates on stormy days.

24. I am wishing for some reading, I get so lonesome at times. Shall be glad if you will please send me "Alone" or "Cleopatra" if good print, and I shall be ever so much obliged. My health is not at all good. I am not able to get out much. My niece is in the house with me. P. P. Higginbotham. Pleasant View, Amherst County, Virginia.

25. Rose Jones, Bassett, Virginia, R.D. 3, a little country girl, will be glad of cards and picture-books.

26. *McCall's Magazine* and *Woman's Home Companion* are asked for by Mrs. Callie Tyson, Ansonville, North Carolina, Box 4.

27. Dr. Walter E. Fernald, Superintendent of the Massachusetts School for Feebleminded, at Waverley, Mass., will be most grateful for illustrated papers or magazines. The patients are very fond of looking at pictures, especially in juvenile papers.

28. I should be so glad if some Cheerful Letter friend would send me the Anne books, —"Anne of Avonlea," "Anne of Green Gables," "Anne of the Islands." I am thirteen years old. Julia Thompson, Granite Springs, Virginia.

29. George Top, Holland, Nebraska, writes: "I should like to join your Exchange, if I may. I am lonesome, alone on the farm, and should like to make friends through writing. Am very fond of all kinds of reading matter; have been a farmer all my life."

30. D. F. Welliver, Nichols, Minnesota, twenty miles from railroad, in a quiet neighborhood, will fully appreciate magazines, letters, or any good reading matter.

31. Mrs. Amos Dix and Mrs. B. A. Thomas, Polkton, North Carolina, Route 3, ask for light reading.

32. Mrs. Arch Brewer, Ansonville, North Carolina, will be glad of reading matter.

33. Mrs. J. Paul Lackey, Elamsville, Virginia, will be grateful for magazines.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

WHAT FATHERS CAN DO FOR THEIR BOYS.

A man of middle age has lately written for one of our leading family magazines some recollections of his boyhood, and of the way in which his father utterly failed to enter into the boy's interests, and to help him grow in the right direction. The writer says:—

It was not that father was lacking in affection. He had that, I am sure, and often showed it. But I know he felt that affection was all we required of him, besides providing us with a home and food and clothing. Apparently it never occurred to father to inquire where I played or with what sort of children. Mother was too busy with the large household to give the matter much attention, and too innocent of the ways of children—especially boys—to have any suspicion regarding my playmates.

My almost daily associates from the time I was eight or nine years old were as familiar

with vice of many kinds as only slum children can be. They knew all about drinking, card-playing, and petty law-breaking. By the time I was eleven or twelve I was a cigarette smoker, chewed tobacco, possessed an extensive and fluent vocabulary of slang and profanity, and had a deep scorn of religion and education. It was my misfortune to be a successful gambler in the beginning. Gradually and unconsciously I forged for myself the fetters of a strong faith in the idea of getting money without work. I believed in it because I had not been provided with other ideas to offset it. No one had ever explained to me that it was dishonest to gamble.

Many of the boys of my acquaintance came of good families, yet lived, as I did, a kind of boyhood that would have fairly stunned their parents, had they known about it.

Had my father ever taken an hour's time to converse with me seriously, when I was about ten years old, he would have discovered how he was failing me. He would have learned things regarding my ideals which would have horrified him. But father never learned anything about the things my boy mind busied itself with, probably because he could not imagine himself in the least interested in anything a child like me might say.

It remained for a high-school teacher—a man who, I now realize, possessed a remarkably clear and sympathetic insight into boy nature—to set me straight on things and give me the right slant on life. He discovered my mental perversions,—I do not know how. He made no fuss about my faults, simply ignoring them in our conversations. But he quietly began to show me, little by little, another world, leading me ever so gently and subtly along paths that were new to me. I did not know I was being led. He made things that I had looked upon with contempt appear attractive. I became interested in books in spite of myself. This man did in my high-school years what it was my father's duty to have begun when I entered primary school. I have no feeling of resentment toward my father for his failures with me, but I know he could have done for me what my high-school teacher did. And he could have done it earlier and better, and saved me much. He could have told me about that other world that he and other decent men lived in—a world whose existence I knew about only vaguely, and was not attracted to because no man I admired and believed in knew anything about it or cared to. He should have provided me with good ideas and good men to admire, for a boy must admire some man, and, *whoever or whatever the man may be*, the boy will *strive to be like him*.

No woman can possibly anticipate the things that happen to a boy; but every man knows! Every man knows the things that happened in his own boyhood, but he goes on blindly, supposing they will skip his son. They never do. The business of every father is to anticipate those things, and so to immunize his son by *strong, clean ideals*, that the wrong ideals will have no effect upon him.

There is a period when a mother is all sufficient, then a period when a mother is very nearly useless, and a boy looks about for some one of his own sex to admire and to imitate. It is a father's place to determine who shall be that model; for if he does not fill that place himself, some one else will!—*Good Housekeeping*.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

The little land of Palestine is a combination of beauty and barrenness. On two sides of it lie sandy deserts, on the north are mountain ranges, and at the west the great sea. It has lonely heights and fertile plains, wild rocks and gentle streams, salt sea and fresh lakes, thorn and thistle together with sweet flowers that bloom in abundance.

During the day it is baked and scorched by the blazing sun. At night it is kissed by dews from Lebanon and saturated by mists that roll in from the Mediterranean.

In this land of contrasting colors, the people of nineteen hundred years ago loved and labored, sacrificed and suffered, and, in great emergencies, knew how to die as nobly as the people of to-day.

Rachael, the daughter of Nathan, lived with her married brother in Bethlehem. Samuel kept a large flock of sheep; and one summer, when she was in her twentieth year, he employed as his assistant a young man from a neighboring village, named Isaac, a tall fellow with a kind heart and willing hands.

Now it came to pass that when his eyes met those of Rachael his heart went out to her, and he loved her as his own soul. As the days passed, the love amounted almost to worship. His affection was returned; and one starry night, late in the summer, they were betrothed.

The very next day there came a wild storm which culminated in a severe tempest.

There is probably nothing more helpless or difficult to manage than a flock of frightened sheep. Samuel and his helper succeeded in guiding them into the fold. As the animals passed under the rod and were in this manner counted, it was discovered that one of the sheep, with her lamb, was missing.

"Let me go," said Isaac. "I will surely find

them both, and if I carry the lamb the mother will follow." So, wrapping his cloak securely about him, he went forth into the storm.

It was some time before he traced them; then, above the noise of the tempest, he heard the pitiful wail of the lost lamb, and the no less pitiful answering cry of its mother. The little creature had wandered to the very edge of an overhanging cliff, where even the sheep could not reach it. Isaac was fearless and sure-footed; climbing carefully up the rocky steep, he caught the trembling thing in his arms and wrapped it in his cloak.

At that moment there came a blinding flash, a deafening roar, and a terrific crash, all in one. Then all was still. A tree just above him was split from the top to the bottom, and, as it fell, it struck the young man on the temple and laid him low. They found him later, with the lamb in his bosom. Save for a bruised leg, the little thing was uninjured; but the shepherd was dead, with the same smile that had lighted up his face when he said, "Poor little lamb!"

There was a voice heard that night,—lamentation and weeping and great mourning,—Rachael weeping for her beloved and refusing to be comforted because he was not!

The storm had spent itself. Samuel tried to comfort his sister as they stood gazing upon the silent face. "Remember our Master's words," said he: "'A good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.'" But she only cried out in anguish, "O Isaac,—would that I had died with thee!"

There came a time when the storm of her grief had spent itself. Gradually she began to realize that they were not separated; that the same love which attracted them in the early summer still united them, and love like theirs could never be lost. Once she said to herself, "I shall go to him, but he cannot come to me." Then she reproved herself, and said: "*Why* may he not come to me? Angels have come many a time to my people. They came with messages of good-will on the plains of Bethlehem. They came in the garden of Gethsemane. They came to Mary at the open tomb, and after our Lord's ascension they came with words of hope and assurance. I may not see him, but surely he will come, and if my spirit listens, some day I may hear his still, small voice."

Then a new light came into her face, a new resolve into her heart. "He has laid down his work here, and I must take it up. It is for me to bring into the fold of Christ the wandering sheep, to comfort the sorrowing, and gather to my heart the tender lambs."

About that time a fever raged in the village and there was need of nursing. Then she went from house to house as occasion required, and gave her service freely. From that time she devoted herself to others, and, in return, gratitude was poured out upon her without measure.

Once, when bending over the couch of a sick friend, the sufferer looked up into the gentle face and said, "Thou art indeed the angel of Bethlehem."

"Not so," she replied. "There *is* an angel in Bethlehem, but we have not seen him."

It was then she heard the still, small voice, which said, "Rachael, thou art mine till the end of eternity!"—*Clara M. Munroe.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE CLEANLINESS OF ANIMALS.

Some people believe that animals prefer uncleanliness, at least that they do not care. Most people have seen the house cat "doll up" by the use of her tongue and paws, but they would be surprised to learn that most other animals, too, prefer to keep clean. I have heard more than one stockman say that cows would stand all night rather than lie down on badly soiled bedding. Sometimes horses all but speak their gratitude to the keeper who curries them. Dogs, too, especially among the house pets, generally show aversion to filth. I have known a fox terrier and a cocker spaniel who would invariably wipe muddy paws on the doormat before entering the house. Of course, they had been trained, but they learned with significant ease. The terrier once worried himself nearly sick over a smear of green paint on his pretty coat.

All animals of the cat family use the tongue for toilet purposes, washing the face by moistening the paws and rubbing them over the eyes and nose. The prickles on the tongue make a good comb, and enable puss to polish her coat very satisfactorily. These prickles (or papellæ) on the lion's tongue are nearly a quarter of an inch long and can be used with the severity of a blacksmith's rasp, when the animal so desires. The rabbit washes its face just as the cat does; and mice and bats also rely greatly on licking.

The honey-bee carries its comb in the fore leg and uses it to clean the antennæ. Some beetles are similarly equipped with a comb, which forms a deep notch protected by a spine at the lower end of the front tibia. Flies of all sorts use the fine fur on their legs as a comb for their wings and bodies.

Owls, herons, cormorants, and other birds use the foot for a comb, the claw of the middle

toe. Larks and some ducks have a saw-like blade running along the inner side of the claw.

Snakes soak themselves; elephants dust themselves and enjoy their bath. Buffaloes, tigers, and some bears like to wallow; the polar bear likes his frigid dive, and spends half his time in the icy arctic waters. Monkeys scratch themselves continually, and this is more an effort at self-currying than a search for parasites. The horse, both wild and domesticated, likes his roll. That wild beasts attach considerable importance to ablutions and drinking is evidenced by their behavior toward each other at the "water hole" when they are seldom attacked by others not of their own kind.

Nearly all birds believe in personal neatness; some take great pains to pluck out with their bills all frayed or ill-shaped feathers. They separate their feathers and carefully pick out all particles of refuse. Pigeons, cockatoos, and larks like their bath in the form of a copious rain; game birds and poultry prefer the dust bath; but the sparrow loves to combine these styles—he takes a dry dust shampoo, then plunges into the water.

Close observation will show that practically all insects and animals have some way of preserving cleanliness. The observer will be struck by the pride that most of our dumb friends manifest. From the prancing race-horse and strutting peacock down to the humble bat, each has some degree of pride. Watch the care with which the butterfly folds its beautiful wings before going to sleep; some of us are not nearly so careful of our clothes, on retiring.—*L. E. Eubanks, in The Young Soldier.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE.

(Concluded.)

These stories of an ancient hero-king of Britain and his friends were for many centuries told and retold without being written down. Then, between four and five hundred years ago, Sir Thomas Malory made a book of the familiar tales. The quaint, old-fashioned language of the stories gives them an added charm.

When the king and all the knights had come from the church, and would have taken their places at the Round Table, one saw a new writing of gold upon the Seat Perilous; and it said, "Four hundred and fifty-four winters after the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ ought this seat to have its owner." And Sir Launcelot counted the years and found they were fulfilled. Then, just as they were ready to sit down there was brought in the young Sir Galahad, by an old man all in white garments. And Sir Galahad bowed him to the king and the nobles; and the old man said unto King Arthur: "I bring you, Sire, a young knight that is of royal lineage and a kinsman of Joseph of Arimathea. Through him shall things marvellous be accomplished for the court and for the fellowship of the Round Table." "Sir," replied King Arthur, "ye be right heartily welcome, and the young knight with you." Then the old man led Sir Galahad to the one vacant seat, the Seat Perilous, beside Sir Launcelot. And all men marvelled; for at once the writing in letters of gold became other than it had been aforetime, and it read *This is the rightful seat of Sir Galahad.* And all the knights wondered that he durst sit there; but they said, "It is certainly God's will. And more things are to come."

And so it was. For there was great noise of mighty thunder. And then came silence, and a sunbeam, seven times more bright than any that ever shone before, lighted up the hall. Then began every knight to behold his fellows fairer and more true than ever before. And they were still, with a great silence. Then there entered into the hall the Holy Grail,* covered with cloth-of-samite, all white, but no man could see it beneath the veil, and no man could see any one bearing it through the hall. Then, when it had passed away, and it was possible for man to speak, the King thanked God for His grace. But the best and the bravest of the knights made vows to ride forth in the morn to seek the Holy Grail and see it once more, plainly. And the young knight, Sir Galahad, made his vow with the rest.

When the knights rode away from King Arthur's court to search for the Holy Grail, each man held in his own heart a high hope of finding it, through valor and readiness for high adventure. They knew not that more was needed. And none could tell who of all the number might be judged worthy of so marvellous a favor from heaven.

Young Sir Galahad, the latest whom the king had received into the goodly fellowship of the Round Table, rode forth with no shield at all; but presently he came to an ancient abbey, where a snow-white shield, marked with a red cross like as it were blood, hung behind the altar. And he desired to know whose that shield might be.

"Fair sir," said to him an aged monk in the church, "many have desired to bear yonder shield, but it is destined for one only, whose heart is clean from all malice and

*The cup from which Jesus and the disciples drank at the Last Supper.

whose mind is clean of all evil thoughts. Valiant knights not a few have desired it, but because of some foul spot in their hidden hearts, they were not worthy; and great disaster hath come upon each man who, being unworthy, hath presumed to take it."

"Tell me, I pray," asked Sir Galahad, right courteously, "whence came this so marvellous shield?" Then the holy man told him how—thirty years after the death of Jesus Christ—Joseph of Arimathea had received it, all white with a cross of red-like blood, from a pious king of that time. And the same Joseph of Arimathea had foretold that one day, after many long years, a true and blameless knight of his own lineage should come to the church to claim it. "And I perceive well, fair sir," said the abbot, "thou art indeed the one for whom it has been well guarded. So take it, my son; and may the grace of our Lord be thine help."

As Sir Galahad heard this he gave thanks and took the shield, and rode away. For he had heard of seven robbers, brothers all, who were most unjustly and despitefully using the poor folk of a land just beyond. These robbers took for themselves all the good things of the land, and answered right cruelly with blows any that durst speak against them. So, when an old man of that country saw the young knight with the white shield riding fast toward the stronghold where the seven wicked brethren dwelt, he would in pity have dissuaded him, saying: "Turn back, fair youth, and save thy strength; for indeed those evil men be too strong for thee to match. Save thyself, therefore, to engage in some more hopeful adventure."

"I shall not turn again," replied Sir Galahad, "till I have tried my strength against theirs. For to service such as this am I vowed and bound as a fellow of the Round Table of our king." And he rode on. So other good knights and true rode also with him against the evil seven, and the robbers were all slain, and the people of the land rejoiced with much gladness.

All this time were the knights seeking the Holy Grail, for whose sight they longed exceedingly. Of them, Sir Launcelot of the Lake came near to finding it. For one night, while he slept, a vision came saying, "Rise up and take thine armor, and enter into the first ship that thou shalt find." And Launcelot made him ready, and came to the shore, and found a vessel there without sail and without oar. And he entered the ship, and lay down with his armor on, and slept. Then, when he awoke once more, he found the boat against a strange strand, near a great castle, with moonlight shining on the walls thereof. Before the castle door two lions lay watching. Then within the castle Sir Launcelot could hear a voice singing so sweetly that it seemed no earthly thing. And Sir Launcelot knew that the Holy Grail was within that castle; but, because for four and twenty years of his life he had been a man full of sins, he was not permitted to see it with his eyes; and he fell to the ground, and lay in a swoon, with no power to rise. So there he lay for four and twenty days and nights, like as it were a punishment for the years that he had been a sinner.

Then afterward Sir Launcelot recovered himself, and went away, most humble in heart, returning unto the court at Camelot. And the king and the queen and all the court welcomed him, and King Arthur said, "Would to God that all of my knights might yet return."

Some did return, but many died in distant lands, without succeeding in their quest. For Sir Galahad was the only one of all the knights of the Round Table who had not some evil in his life to repent of. He alone had a heart never made unclean by an evil desire, and a right arm that had never served an evil cause.

So it came about, after a long time, that Sir Galahad, having done many gallant deeds, rescuing them that were in peril and defending them that were wronged, did find the Holy Grail. It was in a ship upon the sea that he beheld it, set upon a table of silver and covered with a cloth of white samite, and all the air around was wonderful with a great clearness, like in no other place. And the Holy Grail went with Sir Galahad to a country of heathen folk and abode there; and the people chose Sir Galahad to teach them and reign over them, as their king. There one morning early, when it was daybreak, Sir Galahad saw the veil of samite lifted by hands unseen, and beheld at the same time a great company of angels kneeling all about. And he knew in his heart that his hour was come. So he knelt down to pray, and his soul departed and the angels bore it to heaven.

Then was the Holy Grail also borne to heaven. And since that day hath no man seen it on this earth.—(*Adapted from Sidney Lanier.*)

God has so created us that the exercise of every healthy function causes joy. Prayer is meant to be as simple and natural as breathing or working to a healthy man.—*Andrew Murray.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. Hubert Pope, 39 Kenneth Street, West Roxbury, Mass.

Editor of The Cheerful Letter, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer St., Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of *The Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

In sending subscriptions for *The Cheerful Letter,* address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

OFFERS.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

REQUESTS.

THE ATTENTION OF READERS IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

CIRCULATING LIBRARIES.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Miss Helen L. Wells, 269 Franklin Street, Newton, Mass.

STUDIES AT HOME.

The Home Study Committee of the Cheerful Letter Exchange is planning for more efficient work.

Let it be understood that there are no special courses; the instruction is given by volunteers.

Our aim is to help in subjects in which one is deficient; to help one fit himself for a higher grade of work.

We have books used in the schools here which can be used for supplementary work in the schoolroom or in the home.

Make all applications to the Home Study Work, Mrs. Elmer E. Hudson, 5 Alveston Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

MUSIC.

The music sent out by this department has in the past given much pleasure; and now that there is more and more interest in "community singing," the call for help may naturally be expected to be greater.

Offers and requests should be sent to Mrs. T. G. Lacey, 35 East 30th Street, New York City.